

Environmental Assessment

To the programs and policies dealing with existing environmental problems, Ontario has added a dose of preventive medicine — The Environmental Assessment Act to anticipate and forestall the undesirable environmental effects that can result from major development.

The Act provides for early assessment and full government review of major projects at a stage when they can be changed to satisfy environmental concerns. In addition, an independent Environmental Assessment Board can conduct public hearings and review of major development projects assessed under the Act.

This legislation, and the system it provides, cover an area of environmental protection which is not yet fully developed anywhere else in the world. It is the result of extensive study of existing systems in other areas and of public consultation by the Ministry. A Green Paper on Environmental Assessment, prepared and distributed by Ministry staff drew a healthy response of suggestions and comments from the public. This response was considered in the development of the new assessment system.

Into tomorrow...

In environmental assessment, in air pollution control, in water protection and in all the other aspects of environmental protection, the watchword in this province is now, and always has been, co-operation.

Governments, municipalities, industries and individuals — we all have a stake in the future of our environment.

There's a place for each of us to do his share.

**As long as
we care!**

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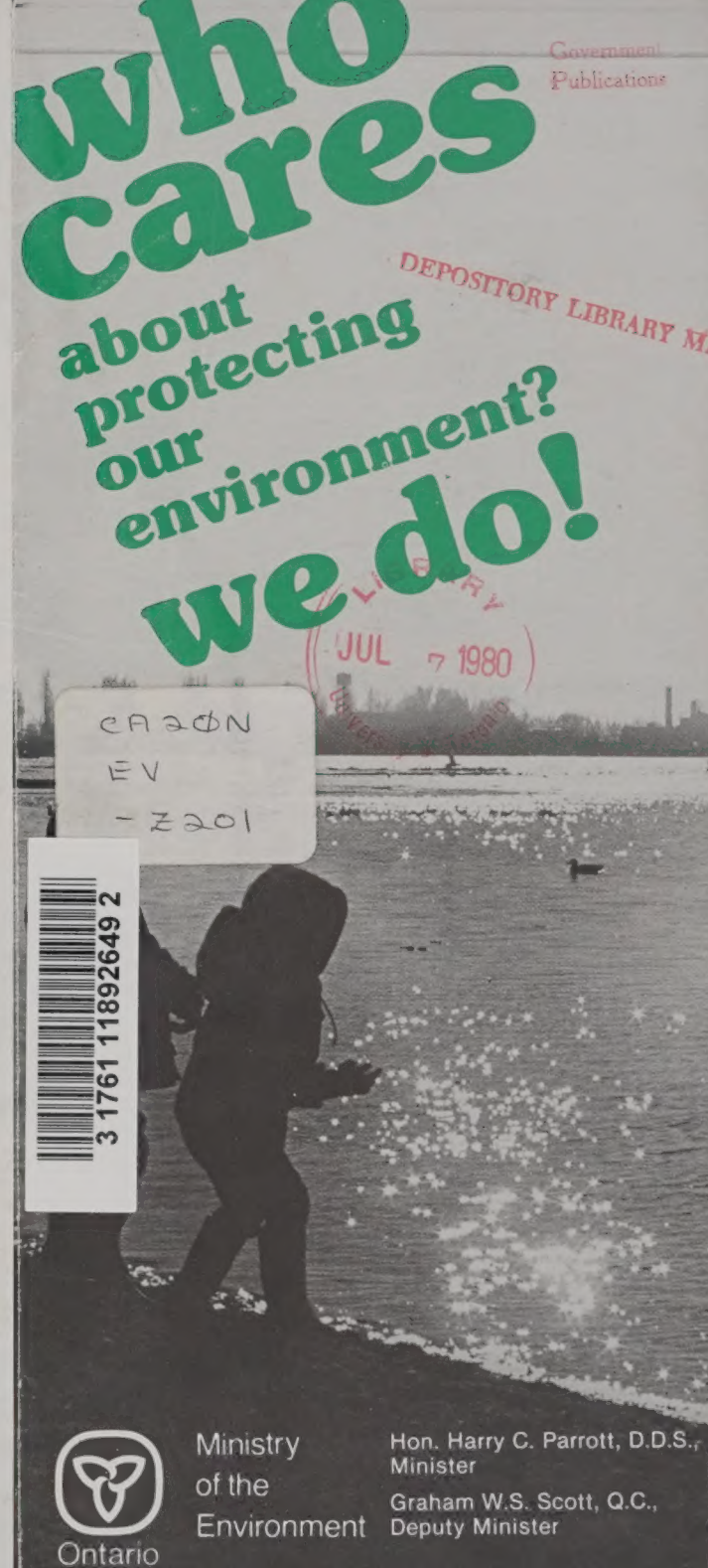
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Reprint
March, 1980

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Ministry of the Environment

Hon. Harry C. Parrott, D.D.S., Minister

Graham W.S. Scott, Q.C., Deputy Minister

Ontario

By and large, all of us in Ontario care. Trouble is, some of our environmental problems are too big for the individual to handle alone — even when he knows he's sometimes part of the problem.

For example:

Garbage:

8,000,000 tons of it are produced in Ontario homes, offices, stores and plants each year.

Sewage:

300,000,000,000 — that's 300 BILLION gallons flow down the pipe in Ontario each year.

Air Pollution:

6,000,000 tons of gases and particles pour into Ontario's air each year.

Garbage, sewage, air pollution — three major problems. Three basic assaults on our natural environment which all of us help to mount, but which are too big for any of us to control on our own.

That's why we have the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. Environment Ontario tackles these three problems and the other jobs that must be done to protect and enhance our natural environment.

The best thing is that in Ontario we're not just part of the problem. We're part of the solution. Individuals, organizations, businesses, industries — we all have a part to play in environmental protection. We're making progress, but we have a lot to do in a short time.

**that's why
we care!**

Ontario leads the way...

Pollution control legislation and the enforcement procedures developed by Ontario environmental agencies during the past two decades form a comprehensive system for the protection, enhancement and restoration of our environment. Today, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment serves as a public service framework within which the public, industry, commerce and government co-operate to produce a better environment.

Background to achievement

In 1956, anticipating the strain our growing population and booming economy would put on our water resources, Ontario created a commission to guarantee a good supply of drinkable water anywhere in the province and to keep our rivers and lakes free of pollution.

In 1967, aware of the damage to property and hazard to health posed by air pollution in other, less fortunate areas, Ontario established an effective system of air pollution control. By 1970 units to handle waste management, pesticides and other environmental problems were incorporated in one department of the environment.

In 1972 these control units were merged into a single comprehensive environmental agency — the Ministry of the Environment. This Ministry brings to bear a tradition of pioneering and a record of achievement in pollution control unmatched by any other jurisdiction on this continent.

Water Management

Since 1956, more than \$4.0 billion has been invested in water and sewage facilities in the province. Environment Ontario has spent over \$1.2 billion of this amount. Through its financial assistance program the Ministry has provided subsidies or grants totalling over \$300 million since 1969 to help make it possible for smaller communities to obtain water and sewage services at a reasonable cost.

Environment Ontario has constructed and operates more than 400 water and sewage systems serving some 300

municipalities. Today, close to 90 percent of the population of the province is served by communal water facilities and 77 per cent by communal sewage systems.

Great Lakes Clean-up

Ontario has led the way in pollution control programs to restore and maintain a high level of water quality in the Great Lakes. The province was the initiator of the agreement between Canada and the United States to clean up the Lakes and to establish an international agreement for protection in the future.

The province has met its deadline for phosphorus removal in the Canada-Ontario Agreement for clean-up of the lower Great Lakes. Permanent phosphorus removal facilities are now in operation at about 200 sewage treatment plants. Constant surveillance and monitoring of the Lakes are required to both catch polluters and to safeguard against possible contamination from new chemicals introduced into the industrial market every year.

Recreational Lakes

The Ministry is concerned about the state of waters around the province's 250,000 cottages. This program continues with a cottager's 'self-help' involvement in lake water quality monitoring.

A survey program began in 1970 and approximately 20,000 cottage systems were inspected in the first three years. The main Rideau System from Ottawa to Kingston, the Thousand Islands area, and the waters of the Trent Canal System have been inspected. In addition, a number of lakes scattered across southern Ontario and Lake of the Woods at Kenora are under study. Ministry staff check regularly to see that water quality standards are met.

The Ministry's province-wide fish testing program is unique in North America, with the findings of fish contaminant monitoring by species published annually as Guides to Eating Ontario Sport Fish, which are available on request. As of April 1, 1979, fish from 625 lakes and rivers have been tested. We believe that the fisherman, whether he is an Ontario angler or a visitor, is entitled to know the safety of his catch.

Industrial Wastes

The Ministry works closely with the industrial and farm communities. Methods to prevent and control pollution resulting from industrial expansion and new technology are prime objectives. All major industries in the province are engaged in pollution abatement programs and Environment Ontario's staff conducts an intensive sampling program to see

that these programs are on schedule. Since the provincial government established these programs, industry has spent over \$500 million to control water pollution.

Waste Management

In 1970, the province assumed responsibility for the regulation of more than 2,100 waste disposal sites throughout Ontario, many of them open dumps.

The Ministry closed 500 of these sites and upgraded the majority of the remainder. Environment Ontario is working with the municipalities toward the eventual disappearance of garbage dumps and sanctions sanitary landfill only where these sites will not cause pollution or environmental damage.

On August 1, 1978, the Ministry consolidated its planning and operational resources for municipal and industrial waste disposal, recycling and reclamation, with the establishment of a new Waste Management Branch.

Recycling and Reclamation

Environment Ontario has established a unique 15-year program to build a solid waste resource system for 90 per cent of Ontario's population which has as its goal the recycling of all wastes to the greatest degree possible.

Ontario is one of the first jurisdictions to make such a total commitment to resource recovery in place of waste disposal, and to create a comprehensive functional system which incorporates the most advanced research facilities.

This includes the development of reclamation centres across Ontario, each with a feeder system for the transfer and transport of garbage. The Ministry also is researching new treatment and reclamation methods and working to develop markets for reclaimed resources at its new Ontario Centre for Resource Recovery in Downsview.

To reduce the quantity of waste produced, the Ministry is encouraging re-use and less packaging. This has entailed working with the beverage container industry to restore the use of refillable containers, and with the packaging industry to reduce waste generated by its products and practices.

Air Management

Environment Ontario operates more than 1400 air quality monitoring instruments across the province which measure 30 common known contaminants. Other pollutants are measured on a special study basis.

The Ministry recently acquired a unique mobile air monitoring unit (TAGA 3000) that provides instant on-the-spot analysis of air quality, representing a breakthrough in atmospheric analysis of pollutants.

The Ministry has established a comprehensive program of air pollution control with the result that Ontario industry has spent, or committed, over \$1 billion for air pollution abatement.

- Since 1968, sulphur dioxide levels in Metropolitan Toronto have been reduced by 80 per cent and levels of particulate by 50 per cent.
- Sulphur dioxide levels in Hamilton, Sudbury, Windsor and Cornwall have decreased by 30 to 50 per cent since 1970. Sulphur dioxide levels are meeting or are near Ontario's objectives in most of the province.
- The results of control programs with respect to suspended particulate matter — airborne dust — are also evident. Particulate levels have lowered in all communities by up to 50 per cent.

Pesticides Control

Food prices today would be four to five times higher if pesticides which control weeds, disease and farm pests were not used. To ensure these and other pesticides are used safely, Environment Ontario applies regulatory and classification systems controlling the sale, distribution and application of these substances.

Insecticide Restrictions

Environment Ontario enforces bans and restrictions on such insecticides as heptachlor, aldrin, dieldrin and DDT. As a result of this enforcement, for example, residues of DDT have decreased markedly in the last five years.

These restrictions and the provincial controls have led to more careful and more selective use of pesticides and, as a result, a great reduction in environmental hazards from the abuse of their use.

Noise Pollution

Noise — defined as "unwanted sound" — is the newest pollutant. Environment Ontario has developed a model noise bylaw and amended The Environmental Protection Act to give municipalities the authority and the methods required to control community noise levels. The Ministry is working with municipalities to develop consistent noise controls and to train the municipal officers who enforce these controls. These advances in noise control are the results of a comprehensive research program. Pilot vehicle noise programs in Toronto and Hamilton served as field tests of draft vehicle noise regulations and control measures.